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NEWS WORTH SHARING.

BECKHAM SLIPS INTO SOMETHING EVEN MORE COMFORTABLE
STAR SAYS NEW H&M UNDERWEAR LINE WAS A NATURAL FIT PAGE 11

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This little piggy went to market — wait, just one?

Epidemic may hurt pork supply if it continues to spread PAGE 6

Booze, bums, beaches, bad blood

Wreck Beach. Alleged liquor-freezie vendor claims she was singled out for not going nude

KATE WEBB
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A woman charged with selling boozy freezies on Wreck Beach last summer alleges "angry nudists" singled her out to police because she refused to abide by their all-nude dress code, in an exclusive interview with Metro.

Alana Thomson, 31, is facing 12 charges of allegedly selling homemade freezies spiked with alcohol. She has not yet entered a plea in court but says she recognizes the gravity of the charges. If convicted, she could face jail time.

Like many women on the clothing-optional beach, Thomson chooses to go topless but not bottomless.

In her only interview since the charges were laid, she responded to comments Judy Williams of the Wreck Beach Preservation Society made to The Province, calling Thomson "obnoxious" and saying that she "didn't follow the dictates of the culture down there."

"There's a community on Wreck Beach that, they sit in one section and they require people in that section to be completely nude," Thomson told Metro on Wednesday.

"They put up signs; if people aren't nude they chase them away. There are people who have been there since the '70s and I believe, because of that, feel they are more entitled to the beach than everyone else.

"They dislike me because I'm not completely nude. I'm a 31-year-old female who is not prepared to drop everything, especially because someone else tells me to. Those are the people that are volunteering negative quotes about me."

Alana Thomson, 31, spoke to Metro on Wednesday in her first interview since being charged with 12 counts of making and selling liquor on Wreck Beach. JENNIFER GAUTHEIR/METRO

RCMP Sgt. Drew Grainger said Thomson is certainly not the first person to be stopped for selling alcohol at the popular summer hangout.

Police hand out hundreds of tickets every year, and last August rangers gave a $115 ticket to one vendor, Tim Madokoro, who was caught selling liquor freezies on the beach.

Grainger couldn't say why Thomson was charged criminally but not Madokoro.

"It was not the same circumstances," he said. "I can't (say more) only because it's before the courts."

Thomson claims that after one vendor was caught selling liquor freezies on the beach last summer, she overheard one of the naturalists say, "Well, he should just tell them he works for Alana."

She claims a friend of hers later told her she overheard that vendor "telling the police specifically that he works for me."

Thomson's apartment was raided on Aug. 19, after her landlord called police to report he suspected she was making freezies and selling them at Wreck Beach.

When Metro phoned her former landlord, Donald Shumka, to ask about Thomson, he said, "I really have nothing to say," and then hung up.

Thomson's next court date is set for Feb. 18.

Allegations

"They dislike me because I'm not completely nude. I'm a 31-year-old female who is not prepared to drop everything, especially because someone else tells me to. Those are the people that are volunteering negative quotes about me."

Alana Thomson, on the 'angry nudists,' one of whom called her 'obnoxious' in the pages of a newspaper.

Local lingo

"Textiles": the nickname naturalists give people who wear clothes on Wreck Beach

NEWS 1

Calls for inquiry into CBSA in-custody death intensify

Lucia Vega Jimenez.
Petition for public inquiry into detainee's death gathers 7,500 signatures

MATT KIELTYKA
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Tears, anger and calls for justice flowed outside the Canada Border Services Agency office as a petition demanding an inquiry into the death of Lucia Vega Jimenez was handed over to officials in Vancouver Wednesday.

Two CBSA representatives uncomfortably faced about a dozen angry protesters, activists and advocates to collect the petition.

They repeatedly offered responses of no comment to the relentless mob, which bombarded them with questions about the circumstances of the 42-year-old Mexican woman's death.

"We are expecting a human answer from the CBSA," said sobbing Mexican journalist and refugee Karla Berenice Garcia Ramirez. "We need answers. We don't want anyone else dying in these inhuman circumstances. We are angry, we are sad."

Jimenez died on Dec. 28, eight days after attempting suicide while under CBSA custody in a holding cell at the Vancouver International Airport.

It took another month for the pubic to learn of the death through media reports.

Questions over Jimenez's treatment, the time it took officials to respond to the incident, the involvement of a private security contractor at the cells and the lack of public transparency have all led to groups such as the B.C. Civil Liberties Association, Pivot Legal Society, No One Is Illegal and the Battered Women's Support Services to demand a public inquiry into the death.

To date, the RCMP has ruled the death is not criminal in nature.

B.C. Coroners Service spokesperson Barb McLintock told Metro a decision on whether to hold a coroner's inquest has yet to be made as the investigation into Jimenez's death is ongoing.

"We want to do it right, as opposed to fast," said McLintock. "But we understand there is significant public interest on this one."

As the death occurred under a federal agency's custody, McLintock said it doesn't fall under the same provincial legislation that mandates an automatic public inquest into a police-involved or in-custody death.

Jorge Salazar hands over a box full of 7,500 signatures, all calling for an inquiry into the death of Mexican woman Lucia Vega Jimenez, to a Canada Border Services Agency official at the agency's Vancouver office on Wednesday. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Pivot lawyer Douglas King said CBSA officers working in B.C. should be governed by the same legislation as any other law enforcement officer.

"It's a no-brainer that the Coroners Act needs to be fixed," said King. "If the CBSA is allowing private security guards to look over people and someone dies in their care, there needs to be a Coroners Inquest."

Opposition leader Adrian Dix added the NDP's voice to the calls for an inquiry, and has written a letter to B.C.'s Attorney General and Coroners Service demanding one.

The federal Ministry of Public Safety and the CBSA both denied interview requests, referring media to a CBSA statement from last week saying the agency is co-operating with the B.C. Coroners Service and RCMP and cannot provide specific details.

Court shown video of Stanley Cup riot beating

Robert MacKay THE CANADIAN PRESS

If he could relive the night of the Stanley Cup riot, Robert MacKay said he would have just gone home with his girlfriend after the Vancouver Canucks lost to the Boston Bruins.

Instead, MacKay stepped between a mob of looters and the Bay department store, triggering an assault that left him recovering from his injuries for nearly three weeks.

"I would never tell anyone to do what I did," MacKay testified Wednesday at the trial of four men accused of attacking him.

On the night of June 15, 2011, a group of 15 people assaulted MacKay, a 39-year-old chef who has been dubbed a good samaritan for trying to fend off the looters.

Carlos Barahona Villeda, Ioannis Kangles, Michael MacDonald and David Leonati are charged with assault and for participating in a riot. They have pleaded not guilty.

On Wednesday, the court was shown several video clips of MacKay as he walked through the masses of people during the night of the riot.

A group of people are then seen grabbing MacKay from behind and punching him in the head and in the back until he is knocked to the ground, where they appear to kick him until two people move in to help him get up.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Liability insurance

B.C. ministries reviewing court decision on designated-driver insurance

B.C.'s transportation minister Todd Stone says he's concerned about a judge's ruling that left a designated driver unable to collect on third-party liability insurance after her drunk passenger caused a serious accident.

The case follows a crash on the Trans-Canada Highway east of Vancouver on July 8, 2006, when a passenger named Kevin Hearne grabbed the steering wheel of a car driven by his girlfriend, Marnetta Felix.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Flying the rainbow flag

London endorses Vancouver's promo of LGBTQ rights in Sochi

London Mayor Boris Johnson has endorsed Vancouver's mission to advance LGBTQ rights at the Sochi Games and at future Olympics, Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson announced Wednesday.

The support from Britain's largest city, host of the 2012 Summer Games, comes two days after openly gay Vancouver Coun. Tim Stevenson met with International Olympic Committee officials in Sochi to urge the organization to update its charter to condemn discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Both cities took care to support the LGBTQ community during their respective turns hosting the Olympics.

London followed in Vancouver's footsteps by opening a Pride House, a community-led safe space for LGBTQ coaches, athletes and visitors that originated on the west coast in 2010. METRO

South Vancouver. Council supports seniors centre

South Vancouver seniors can finally celebrate a community centre of their own.

City council will fill the funding gap so construction can get started on a 10,000-square-foot seniors centre with a kitchen and an elevator beside the Killarney Community Centre, a project that has been in the works for more than a decade.

It will add $1.2 million from the 2013 operating surplus to the land and $2.5 million it has already earmarked. Ottawa will provide $2.5 million and the province $1.3 million.

The unanimous council vote will bring the city's share of the project to 53 per cent.

Seniors applauded the decision, which was made after partisan bickering over whether to formally ask the province for more cash. Both NPA and Vision Vancouver politicians took credit for the decision on Twitter.

There are more than 27,600 seniors in the neighbourhood, and the baby boomers haven't even retired yet, advocate Lorna Gibbs said.

Gibbs was thrilled with the decision, noting that if the facility is built with a rooftop patio and proper kitchen, it could even generate revenue as a reception venue.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

North Face. Canadian Olympic Committee files trademark lawsuit

The Canadian Olympic Committee is suing clothing maker The North Face, alleging the apparel company infringed on Olympic trademarks and attempted to mislead consumers into believing it is officially connected to the Games.

The lawsuit, filed in B.C., is the latest to focus on allegations of so-called "ambush marketing," a term the International Olympic Committee uses to describe the practice of companies exploiting the brand without paying to be an official sponsor.

The case, which names the Canadian arm of VF Corp., The North Face's parent company, focuses on a line of clothing originally known as the Villagewear Collection. It was later renamed the International Collection in response to complaints from the Canadian Olympic Committee.

The product line features items such as jackets, toques and bags adorned with the colours and flags of various countries. Several items were emblazoned with "RU/14," which the lawsuit says is an obvious reference to Russia and the 2014 Sochi Games, while others featured "2.7.14," an apparent reference to the date of this week's opening ceremonies, says the statement of claim. THE CANADIAN PRESS

15 years

Two Hells Angels sentenced for fatal beating

Two members of the Hells Angels have been sentenced to 15 years for the 2011 beating death of Dain Phillips, of Kelowna. Norman Cocks and Robert Thomas were charged with second-degree murder but pleaded guilty to manslaughter — the first such conviction of full-patch members of the biker gang. Phillips, who was 51, was beaten with a hammer and baseball bat when he tried to resolve a dispute between his two sons and old acquaintances.

Four others are scheduled to go to trial.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Immigrants, refugees

B.C. to address domestic violence

The B.C. government is aiming to develop a domestic-violence program that would include specific approaches to help aboriginal, immigrant, refugee and disabled women.

Children's Minister Stephanie Cadieux says various groups were consulted as part of a three-year plan to provide new and enhanced services for vulnerable women and kids.

The province promised to launch a domestic-violence program after the 2008 murders of three children in Merritt by their mentally ill father.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A rendering of the proposed development at Cambie Street and 57th Avenue. CONTRIBUTED

Human rights top of mind for developers

Pearson Dogwood site. New towers, SkyTrain station planned while considering rights of those with disabilities

A new promise to protect the rights of persons with disabilities comes with 28-storey towers and a new Canada Line station.

City council unanimously adopted on Wednesday the policy statement for development of the Pearson Dogwood site at 57th Avenue and Cambie Street after Vancouver Coastal Health amended its proposal to enshrine the rights of people with disabilities.

VCH wants to sell off chunks of the land to developers and use the cash, among other things, to upgrade two facilities on the site in dire need of repairs. One of the facilities provides residential care for seniors, many of whom have advanced Alzheimer's disease, and the other houses people with disabilities.

It plans a swath of condos, a new YMCA and even a SkyTrain station to serve people in the more than 3,000 proposed residential units. At least 20 per cent of units are planned to be affordable housing.

Council rejected VCH's plan two weeks ago amidst emotional pleas from people with disabilities who decried the creation of a new institution with 37 beds despite a UN Convention condemning the practice.

But in the two weeks since council sent VCH back to the drawing board, it changed its tune.

It will ensure it obeys the UN Convention, build independent housing units with supports for all current residents and collaborate with a variety of organizations before finalizing housing plans. Some potential models include pods with shared kitchens.

Most community members, including Jill Weiss of the city's persons with disabilities advisory committee, applauded the changes. "We have the right to choose where and how to live with whom, to have control over daily lives and live within the community," Weiss said.

While advocates for people with disabilities are satisfied the plan will evolve with their input, they will be watching VCH closely to ensure the most up-to-date housing models are built.

And you can bet the rest of the community will chime in as VCH pursues re-zonings on the site over the next two years.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

The Spirit of Vancouver Island.
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

BC Ferries service to face cuts

B.C.'s transportation minister says cuts are coming to 16 BC Ferries routes, even though the majority of people who participated in public consultations opposed service reductions.

The province is pressing ahead with controversial plans to cut $18.9 million in services, effective April 28, MLA Todd Stone confirmed Wednesday. Revised sailing schedules will be posted by next month.

Stone also said the government still intends to eliminate free trips for seniors on April 1, instead offering them half-price fares, and it will introduce slot machines on some ferries as part of a pilot project.

The cuts are part of the plan to keep rising fares in check, Stone said, adding that service cuts will save almost $19 million over the next two years.

"I understand the frustration that there is in coastal communities today," Stone told a news conference in Victoria.

"This is a very, very tough decision. I have said from Day 1 that we as a government are under no illusions that there will be impacts felt in each and every community, no doubt about that."

He said BC Ferries are remaking schedules for ferry routes, which will see the elimination of some sailings during the mid-day periods.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New York. Suspect in drug case had Hoffman's phone number: Police

At least one of four people taken into custody on drug charges during an investigation of actor Philip Seymour Hoffman's suspected fatal heroin overdose had the actor's cellphone number, two law enforcement officials said Wednesday.

Investigators zeroed in on the four after a tipster, responding to publicity about Hoffman's death, told police he had seen Hoffman at the lower Manhattan apartment building where they were arrested on Tuesday and he believed that's where Hoffman got the heroin, the officials said.

After obtaining search warrants for two apartments in the building, police found about 350 packets of heroin in one of them, the officials said. They also learned from phone records that one of the suspects had Hoffman's number, strengthening the theory that they may have supplied him with drugs, the officials said.

Some of the packets found in Hoffman's apartment were variously stamped with the ace of hearts and others with the ace of spades. Those found in the building where the arrests occurred had different brand names, including Black List and Panda, the officials said.

The officials weren't authorized to speak about evidence in the ongoing investigation of the death and spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

Police were still waiting for a cause of death for the Oscar-winning actor from the medical examiner's office, which said on Wednesday that more tests were needed.

There was no timetable for Hoffman's autopsy to be finished, said medical examiner's office spokeswoman Julie Bolcer, who declined to discuss the pending tests. Toxicology and tissue tests are typically done in such cases.

Hoffman, 46, was found dead Sunday with a needle in his arm, and tests found heroin in samples from at least 50 packets in his apartment in Manhattan's Greenwich Village, law enforcement officials have said.

The four suspects face charges of criminal possession of a controlled substance. Two also face charges of criminal possession of drug paraphernalia.

A private funeral for relatives and close friends of Hoffman is set for Friday, and a larger memorial service will be held later this month, his publicist Karen Samfilippo said.

On Wednesday night, Broadway theatres dimmed their lights in memory of the Tony Award-nominated actor, and members of the theatre community held a candlelight vigil for him. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A couple adds to the flowers placed outside the apartment of actor Phillip Seymour Hoffman in New York on Tuesday. RICHARD DREW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russia

Railway fire forces evacuation

Several dozen railway cars carrying gas exploded into fireballs in Russia on Wednesday, suspending traffic on the Trans-Siberian Railway and prompting evacuations from nearby buildings, emergency officials said. No injuries were reported.

The crash occurred at a railway station in Kirov, about 800 kilometres northeast of Moscow, when 32 railcars loaded with gas derailed and caught fire.

The inferno engulfed a large area around the station, forcing the evacuation of about 700 nearby residents, the Emergency Situations Ministry said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sochi security beefed up

Russian President Vladimir Putin signs a wall at the Coastal Cluster Olympic Village on Wednesday in Sochi. ALEXEI NIKOLSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Winter Olympics. Russia's law-and-order president not taking terrorist threat lightly

President Vladimir Putin pointed Wednesday to the Boston Marathon bombings as a big reason for the intense security around the Winter Olympics starting in Russia this week.

The Chechen brothers accused of the 2013 Boston attacks hailed from just a few hundred kilometres away from the Olympic sites at Sochi. This Black Sea town and neighbouring Caucasus Mountains are readying to host world leaders, thousands of athletes and many more spectators at the Feb. 7-23 games.

Twin bombings in another southern Russian city in December have heightened terrorism fears around the Sochi events.

Intelligence agencies from multiple countries will be working together around the clock at a special headquarters in Sochi, Putin said while visiting Olympic sites Wednesday.

"In the U.S., people died at a marathon, during the G8 there were terrorist acts in the London subway," he said, according to Russian news agencies.

Putin rose to power and popularity 15 years ago on law-and-order, hard-on-terrorism policies that critics say go too far and suppress human rights. He had long warned the West about the dangers posed by Chechen rebels, and urged closer security co-operation with Washington after the Boston Marathon attacks.

Putin has made security central to the Olympic project, in which he has taken an unusual personal interest.

Despite hang-ups and criticism and higher costs than any Olympics in history, Putin told athletes and staff Wednesday that "Russia is ready to host the Games." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Win one for Mother Russia

"Fans will be watching your every appearance with the greatest attention. We're all counting on you."

Russian President Vladimir Putin voices words of encouragement to his nation's Olympic athletes during a pre-Sochi pep talk on Wednesday

Backlash

Protests over anti-gay laws intensify

A U.S. Olympic sponsor and a UN panel condemned a Russian law criticized as a stifler of gay rights as protests took place around the world Wednesday.

The law signed by Russian President Vladimir Putin in July bans pro-gay "propaganda" that could be accessible to minors.

Detractors have pressed the International Olympic Committee and its corporate sponsors to denounce the law and call for its repeal.

One of those sponsors, McDonald's, was targeted Wednesday by protesters in London and Paris, where about 50 people gathered in front of one of the fast-food chain's restaurants in the Place de la République.

In London, about 150 people rallying outside Prime Minister David Cameron's office in London urged McDonald's and the IOC's other sponsors to speak out. The activists there said they plan to deliver a petition signed by more than 100,000 people to a nearby McDonald's restaurant. Protests also took place in St. Petersburg, Russia; New York, Jerusalem and Rio de Janeiro. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rome. UN report urges Vatican to come clean on abuse

The Vatican "systematically" adopted policies that allowed priests to rape and molest tens of thousands of children over decades, a UN human-rights committee said Wednesday, urging the Holy See to open its files on pedophiles and bishops who concealed their crimes.

The UN committee severely criticized the Holy See for its attitudes toward homosexuality, contraception and abortion and said it should change its own canon law to ensure children's rights and their access to health care are guaranteed.

The Vatican promptly objected and its UN ambassador accused the committee of having betrayed the international body's own objectives by allowing itself to be swayed by pro-gay ideologues.

Pope Francis greets the faithful as he arrives for his weekly general audience at the Vatican on Wednesday. ALESSANDRA TARANTINO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The report, which took the Vatican by surprise in its harsh tone, puts renewed pressure on Pope Francis to move decisively on the abuse front and make good on pledges to create a Vatican commission to study sex abuse.

The commission was announced in December, but few details have been released since then.

The committee issued its recommendations after subjecting the Holy See to a day-long interrogation last month on its implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the key UN treaty on child protection, which the Holy See ratified in 1990.

Critically, the committee rejected the Vatican's long-standing argument that it doesn't control bishops or their abusive priests, saying the Holy See was responsible for implementing the treaty not just in the Vatican City State but around the world "as the supreme power of the Catholic Church through individuals and institutions placed under its authority." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vets. Medical discharges lead to 'area of unfairness'

Some Canadian soldiers given medical discharges find they don't qualify for benefits because Veterans Affairs uses different, more stringent criteria in an "unfair" process, the military ombudsman told a Senate committee Wednesday.

Pierre Daigle, whose term ends in a few weeks, testified many ex-soldiers have to fight to prove the conditions that made them ineligible to serve are a result of their service.

Once released, Veterans Affairs demands the ill and injured be subject to a separate assessment above and beyond whatever examination has been conducted at National Defence. For veterans, it can be a bureaucratic conundrum that often leads to a denial of benefits and a lengthy appeals process.

"This is an area of unfairness which needs to be looked at," Daigle said.

Daigle said he has had heard from former members directly, even though his mandate doesn't extend to Veterans Affairs, and told senators one individual described the process "as the equivalent of being pushed off a cliff." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Arturo. Polar bear unlikely to make move to Winnipeg

Winnipeg's Assiniboine Park Zoo says a polar bear living in an Argentinian zoo will probably have to stay there.

People have been protesting the treatment of Arturo, a polar bear at the Mendoza Zoo. With temperatures drastically warmer than what a polar bear is used to, and a lack of quality facilities for the bear, protesters say the bear is not doing well.

The Assiniboine Park Conservancy has been in talks with the zoo to get Arturo transferred to the Assiniboine Park Zoo, but the APC said Wednesday it's unlikely to happen.

Arturo the polar bear will likely have to stay in Argentina, where protesters say he's being mistreated. HANDOUT

"It does not appear that a Canadian import permit can be issued for Arturo," the APC said in a statement.

ELISHA DACEY/METRO IN WINNIPEG

CN, union reach deal, avert strike

Keeping it rail. The federal government said it was prepared to force striking workers to go back on the job

CN Rail and the Teamsters union have reached a tentative contract agreement, averting a potential strike by 3,000 workers that could have come as early as this weekend.

Both sides said late Wednesday that details of the three-year contract won't be released until it is ratified by union members.

Teamsters spokesman Stephane Lacroix described the negotiations as a "bit chaotic," but said CN came to the union with a series of proposals late in the day.

"As a result, we're very happy to avoid a strike this weekend," Lacroix said, adding he hopes union members will ratify the agreement this time.

Lacroix noted that Labour Minister Kellie Leitch's announcement that Ottawa was preparing back-to-work legislation in the event of a strike likely helped move things along.

He said union members will soon get to see the agreement and likely vote on it in the coming weeks.

The union's strike notice came days after Teamster members, representing conductors, train employees and yard workers, rejected a tentative contract reached last fall with CN.

The federal government had said it was prepared to intervene and force CN workers back on the job should they go ahead with a walkout, which could have come as early as Saturday morning.

CN congratulated the union for averting a possible strike.

"This will ensure continued service to our customers in a very challenging environment where extreme winter conditions have hampered CN operations and affected service levels," said Jim Vena, CN's executive vice-president and chief operating officer.

"CN has offered to work closely with the union leadership to explain the terms of the agreement to union members over the next 45 days to help ensure a successful ratification of the agreement," Vena said in a statement.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Winter weather causes massive pileup on Ontario highway

Rescue workers attend the scene of a multi-vehicle pileup on Highway 401 westbound near Trenton, Ont., on Wednesday. Ontario provincial police said via Twitter that the accident was more than a kilometre long and had closed down the highway. OPP said about 25 tractor trailers and 10 smaller vehicles were involved in the string of collisions as many roads in eastern and southern Ontario were covered in snow from the substantial snowstorm.

JUSTIN CHIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Environmentalists call government's plan to review pesticides a 'victory'

Environmentalists are declaring victory over a federal government announcement that it will conduct a health review of 23 pesticides, including a weed killer found everywhere from wheat fields to suburban lawns.

But they point out the decision comes only after several lawsuits were filed last summer and suggest it shouldn't take legal action to get Ottawa to follow the law.

"It is a victory in that sense, that we're getting them to do something they've never done before," said Elaine MacDonald of the environmental law group Ecojustice. "But we shouldn't have to sue them to get them to do it."

Last August, four lawsuits were filed over 29 chemicals, all of which Ecojustice said were banned in Europe. The federal government is obliged by law to review chemicals that are banned in any country belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Health Canada had originally declined to do any studies. It said some of the chemicals had been recently examined and found to present acceptable risks. The agency added that it wanted to consider reasons for the European bans before conducting studies on the others.

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency quietly reversed that decision in a website posting dated Dec. 30.

"The (agency) … has determined that this subsection's criteria have been met, namely that a member country of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development prohibits all uses of this active ingredient for health or environmental reasons."

Four of the six chemicals Canada won't review were found to be still in limited European use, restricted to functions such as anti-flea dog collars. The final two are not used in Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Indiana

Father reunited with abducted son

A man says he quickly recognized his son when he saw him for the first time since his mother abducted him as a little boy 18 years ago and fled to Mexico.

Steven Slinkard of Indiana tells the Daily Reporter his now-23-year-old son Nathan was carrying a picture of them together from before the boy's mother fled with him and two siblings to Mexico in 1995.

Authorities say Nathan Slinkard walked into the U.S. Consulate in Guadalajara last month and asked to return home. He arrived last week in Indianapolis.

Steven Slinkard says he's glad his son is back. He says he wants to also see his other son and daughter and hopes they know he never gave up on finding them.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quebec

Family drama claims the life of 11-year-old girl

An 11-year-old girl has become the fourth person to die in a family drama that police believe was triggered by a possible love triangle.

Beatrice Godin died Tuesday night after being in critical condition since the weekend. She was one of the two daughters of Martin Godin, who police say is the prime suspect in the deaths.

Provincial police say the 54-year-old man was taken to hospital Saturday night after the slayings of three people, including his other daughter, 13-year-old Medora.

The other people who died were Godin's ex-wife, Nancy Samson, and her boyfriend, Benoit Daigle.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

No need to be a pig and start hogging all the bacon ... yet

Oink, oink. The price of pork is likely to rise only slightly due to virus sweeping North America: Experts

SCOTT TAYLOR
Metro in London, Ont.

The virus that's rippling its way across Ontario pig farms could hit pork lovers' pocketbooks if the spread continues.

While no one's forecasting a blockbuster spike in bacon prices any time soon, each new case of the ever-so-charmingly-named porcine epidemic diarrhea pushes the chances one step closer.

Prices have already seen a bit of a nudge thanks to the virus's spread in the U.S., which has been battling the bug since the spring. There, more than 2,600 cases of the virus have been confirmed in 23 states, according to the latest data from the American Association of Swine Veterinarians.

Aw, these little piggies might be adorable, but the not-so-adorable porcine epidemic diarrhea could push pork prices up. GETTY IMAGES FILE

"It all depends on how it plays out in Ontario, whether we can contain it to the sites we have now or if it blows up like it did in the U.S.," said London, Ont.-area hog farmer Jim Denys. "If it does, it may affect the price further."

By June, bacon in urban U.S. supermarkets had jumped to nearly $5 US a pound, about 15 per cent higher than the same time in 2012, according to government data. End-of-year data shows a 20 per cent price jump per pound, although some of that can be attributed to the bacon craze that swept North America in 2013, sources have said.

Hands-off learning

A hologram of a beckoning prostitute is shown at the entrance of the "Red Light Secrets" museum in Amsterdam on Tuesday. On any given evening, thousands of tourists stroll down the narrow streets of Amsterdam's famed Red Light District, gawking at ladies in lingerie who work behind windows, making a living selling sex for money. Now a small educational museum is opening in the heart of the district that aims to show reality from the other side of the glass. Organizer Melcher de Wind says the Red Light Secrets museum is for those who want to learn more about how the area works without actually visiting a prostitute. EVERT ELZINGA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Economy. Tories' budget may lead to short-term gain but long-term pain: NDP

The New Democrats say the governing Conservatives' rush to balance the books could delay the economic recovery from the recession.

NDP finance critic Peggy Nash says cuts and austerity measures risk slowing the economy and maintaining higher unemployment, or even increasing it.

She says her party wants to balance the books as quickly as possible, but not at the risk of putting the brakes on the economy.

Nash says the NDP have some inexpensive ideas for next week's budget, including reversing the controversial cuts to Veterans Affairs from the previous budget.

The New Democrats are also asking for measures they say will create jobs, such as providing a $1,000 tax credit to small businesses to offset the costs of hiring a new worker, at a cost of about $113 million.

They also want the government to cap ATM and credit-card fees, saying consumers shouldn't have to pay two or three dollars to withdraw their own money from bank machines.

NDP finance critic Peggy Nash
THE CANADIAN PRESS

The NDP were not the only ones doling out criticism.

Duff Conacher of the group Democracy Watch spoke out against the push by the NDP saying the only way to protect consumers from gouging is to impose limits on big-bank profits.

Conacher says capping ATM fees or providing more free banking options will only push the banks to find other ways to increase the cost to consumers.

Even if fees are capped, banks will find a way to make money elsewhere, said Conacher.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Community input

Feds to tighten cell-tower rules

Ottawa says it is tightening laws governing construction and placement of new cellular antenna towers to require consultation with communities on all commercial installations, regardless of height.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Searched for resolution

EU antitrust watchdog accepts Google's changes

The European Union's antitrust watchdog on Wednesday accepted "far-reaching" concessions offered by Google to settle allegations it is abusing its dominant position in Internet searches, bringing the three-year-old case close to an end.

Google would significantly change the ways it displays some search results in Europe in favour of its competitors.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unsportsmanlike?

The North Face hit with lawsuit

The Canadian Olympic Committee is suing clothing maker The North Face, alleging the apparel company infringed on Olympic trademarks and attempted to mislead consumers into believing it is officially connected to the Games.

The lawsuit is the latest case to focus on allegations of so-called "ambush marketing," a term the International Olympic Committee uses to describe the practice of companies exploiting its brands without paying to be official sponsors. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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HEEL EDGE OF TECH DEFENDS EBOOKS

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

I'm not really on the cutting edge when it comes to technology. I've spent a lot of my life living in the past (also known as New Brunswick), so I'm more like the back part of the knife that you push on when you're slicing.

Google tells me that part is called the spine, which still gives me too much credit, society-wise. The middle part is the heel. That seems about right.

I am on the cutting heel of technology.

So when I say that I believe ebooks are far superior to regular books and will one day replace them, don't take it as a bold pronouncement of Things to Come. Take it as a sign that smarter people than me have likely been saying it for years, and now that it's occurred to me it must be more mainstream than Leno.

Until recently I was among those who felt that paper books were unquestionably superior. Ebooks weren't great when they first hit the market, which gave us traditionalists cover as we pointed out that the battery or lights or selection or cost weren't very good.

It was like we looked at the Wright brothers' rickety plane at Kitty Hawk and scoffed: "No way that thing is going to get 350 passengers from Vancouver to Hong Kong on an overnight flight. What were they thinking?"

But now that ebooks have long-life batteries, easy-to-read screens, excellent selection and good prices, people in the pro-book camp have resorted to a couple of paperweight arguments.

The first, from people who have not tried ebooks on principle, usually involves what might to go wrong — like deleting a book or running out of power. These problems are so unlikely that it's like saying a horse is preferable to a car because horses never accidentally deploy their airbags.

The second, more popular argument is that there's "just something" about books. The smell, the feel, the heft, the look. We are judging the book by its cover, and we'll caress it and smell it like it's Ryan Gosling or Scarlett Johansson, thank you very much. All well and good, except there is nothing intrinsically pleasant about the feel or smell of a book. I like those sensations too but it's only because I associate them with book reading and therefore feel positively about them. If it was all about heft we should just carry around five-pound Ps and Qs. "Don't mind these, they're fun to lift." (Besides, my e-reader has a cover that smells just fine.)

Paper books aren't going anywhere, any more than globes and vinyl records are, and all reading is good. But I think books will become curios and hobby pieces while ebooks will dominate the mainstream completely.

I've thought of starting a business that sells blank paper books (one per household) so families will still have something to grope and sniff as they read, but I'm sure someone else has already thought of it. So said the heel.

I suppose I could take a page out of their book but, well, you know.

ZOOM

Don't have a cow, man — have two

ALL PHOTOS 2014 SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS

Cattle race carnage gets a photo finish

Yongsheng Zheng's photograph gives us a glimpse into Indonesia's adrenaline-fuelled festival of Pacu Jawi (cow racing).

The annual event sees brave jockeys grab the tails of a pair of cows and skate across muddy rice fields barefoot while balancing on a wooden plank.

The Minangkabau people of West Sumatra have been marking the event for 400 years to celebrate the yearly end of the rice harvest season.

Zheng's photo made the World Photography Organisation's shortlist of the 2014 Sony World Photography Awards.

Pictured to the right are a few more of the nominees.

METRO

Sophie Gamand's Wet Dog is a series of portraits of dogs in mid-bath, photographed half a second before they shake their fur.

Louise Porter submitted this photograph of young men from the Kara tribe in Ethiopia.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Did you know that there are people in Sochi aside from reporters cracking wise about a half-finished insta-city? There are athletes there too, and they seem much happier to be there. Follow these Canadians on Instagram to see for yourself.

CONTRIBUTED

Charles Hamelin:

A three-time medallist short-track speedskater who also happens to excel at the Maniacal Selfie In A Crowd event. He even got close enough to snap a photo of Vladimir Putin joining a Japanese athlete for a dining hall selfie. The caption calls him Vladimir Poutine. A genuine mistake or a potentially dangerous gag? Neither? Charles Hamelin: Enigma. (/charleshamelin)

Travis Gerrits:

A freestyle skier boasting a silver medal from the 2013 FIS World Championships, Gerrits represents Canada in one of the Games' most photogenic sports. And if soaring skiers frozen in time doesn't sound like your kind of thing, he also has a very handsome dog. (/travisgerrits)

Canadian Olympic Team:

Since things have yet to officially kick off, the official feed is a patriotic mix of athletes looking chuffed in shiny new Olympic merchandise or athletes looking chuffed after success in Vancouver. But once the festivities are on, it'll be hard to beat the access. (/cdnolympicteam)

Twitter

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A petition has been started to remove a lifelike sculpture of a man in his underwear from a woman's college campus in the U.S. Should Sleepwalker stay or go?

@PorcelainTear I can understand why that such statue would cause a stir. It looks very real & somewhat disturbing for that reason

Comments

RE: How Far Would You Go For Free Breast Implants? Published online Feb. 5, 2014

If you have left over money, please donate to sick and starving kids around the world, not for shallow people who only care for their look.

Kim, posted to metronews.ca

"I would feel more confident" — for a month or two, that is, until you find something else about your body that makes you insecure.

Al_Gee, posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: vancouverletters@metronews.ca

metro

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Dances for a Small Stage has big Valentine's Day plans

Lots to do for lovers.
Dancers plan romantic tribute while film world boasts fests

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

They've trained since they were kids. Sacrificed everything for the opportunity to perform.

They've pushed through injuries, personal setbacks, even tragedy. They've felt the thrill of victory. And the agony of defeat.

Now they're ready for the spotlight. To paraphrase singer-songwriter Phil Collins, they've been waiting for this moment for all their lives. This is their time to show us what they're made of on one of the world's smallest stages.

Of course, I'm talking about the dancers in next week's Dances for a Small Stage. (Oh, yeah, the Winter Olympics start tomorrow too.)

Because romance! Yes, the 30th installment of Vancouver's biggest little stage is a Valentine's-themed affair, but don't expect clichéd hallmark interpretations from its eclectic cast of characters, which includes choreographer Peter Chu, local actors John Murphy, James Fagan Tait and Patti Allan, as well as dancers Noam Gagnon, Rob Kitsos, Karissa Barry and more.

"Small Stage has always been about doing things differently. So when we say 'Valentine's themed,' you really shouldn't expect much gushy sentiment," says MovEnt artistic producer Julie-anne Saroyan.

Expect the unexpected

"Small stage has always been about doing things differently — so when we say 'Valentine's themed' you really shouldn't expect much gushy sentiment."
MovEnt artistic producer Julie-anne Saroyan

"Our tribute to the romantic day will instead take the form of Jon Murphy emceeing as Oz's heartless Tin Man.

"He's written his own politically incorrect, rather scandalous script that will usher audiences through one of the most varied and high-profile line-ups ever."

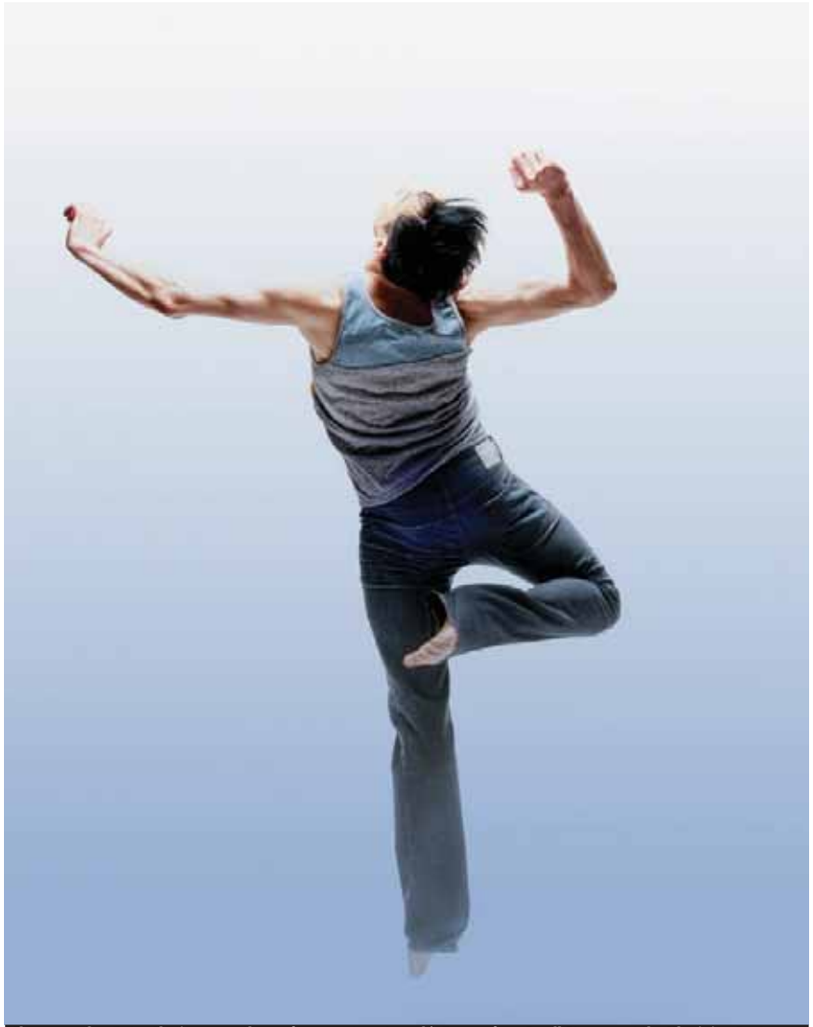
Dances for a Small Stage 30 is at the Ukrainian Centre (154 East 10th Ave.) Feb. 13-15 (Show at 8 p.m.). Tickets: $20. More information at MovEnt.ca.

If small stages don't fit in with your big plans, check out the Vancouver International Mountain Film Festival, which starts tomorrow and runs until February 15 at the Centennial and Rio Theatres, as well as Cinematheque. Find out more about the films and speakers at VIMFF.org.

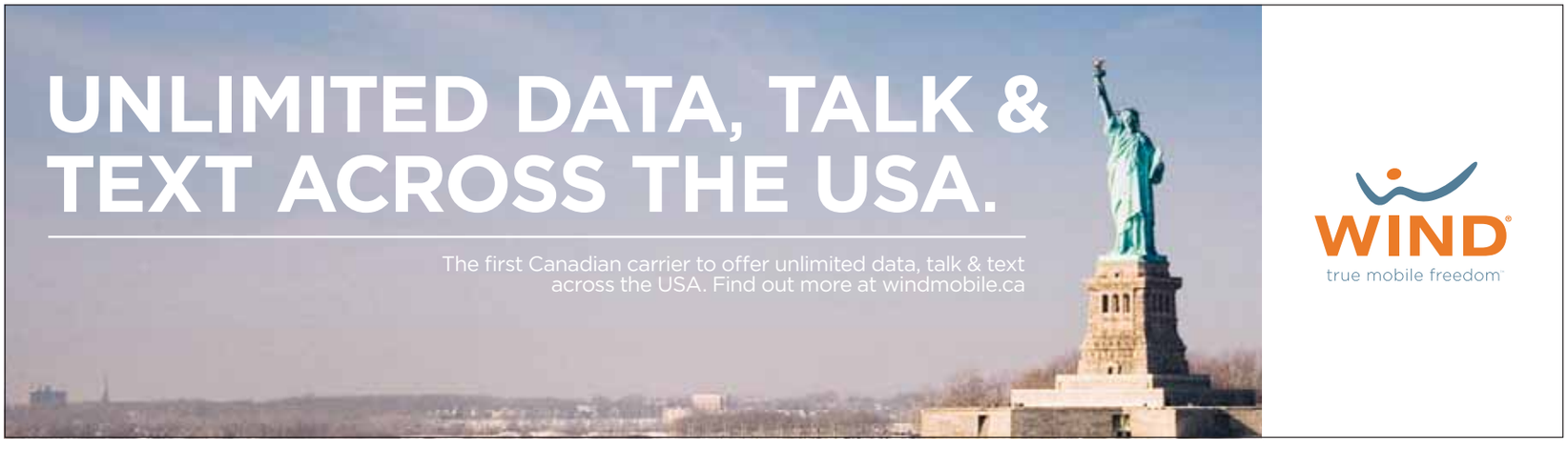
Prefer a selection of top-notch short films?

Hit up the Oscar Shorts at Vancity Theatre before March 1 for this year's nominated live-action and animated films. More info at VIFF.org.

And, go Canada, go.



Choreographer Peter Chu is among the performers at next week's Dances for a Small Stage 30 at the Ukrainian Centre.
LEVI WALKER/CONTRIBUTED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Clay Aiken. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

American Idol runner-up Clay Aiken puts career on hold to run for Congress

Former American Idol runner-up Clay Aiken is running for Congress in North Carolina.

Aiken said Wednesday he'll seek the Democratic nomination for the seat currently held by Rep. Renee Ellmers.

The 35-year-old Aiken has been a special education teacher in Wake County. He says he decided to put his entertainment career on hold and seek to represent the state's 2nd Congressional District.

He says he considers Washington to be dysfunctional and will focus on jobs and the economy, as well as the importance of education.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cher skips wedding over feud with son Elijah

Cher

Cher's ongoing feud with her son, Elijah Blue, and his new wife, Angie King, shows no sign of abating and recently resulted in Cher missing their wedding and excluding them from family holiday activities, Blue tells the National Enquirer.

"I've always been the black sheep of my family. We have lots of ups and downs, and now isn't the best time," says Blue, who married King in early December. "It's like a Mexican standoff, but we have a history."

The latest spat apparently results from an October falling out between Cher and her new daughter-in-law that prompted the Burlesque star to kick the pair out of her Malibu home, where they'd been staying. "You've got two strong women, two big bulls in the pen," Blue says. "I think there's a respect and I think they butt heads."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Selena sneaks off to rehab — for 'emotional issues'

Selena Gomez reportedly snuck away for a two-week stay at an Arizona rehab facility, though her rep insists to Radar Online it was for emotional issues.

"Selena voluntarily spent time at (Dawn at the) Meadows, but not for substance abuse," her rep says, though other sources insist the former Disney star has been "partying very hard" in the months leading up to her secret stay.

"With fame came a partying lifestyle," says a source, while another adds that ex-boyfriend Justin Bieber probably wasn't helping matters.

"Selena came to understand just what a bad influence Justin had been on her life," the second source says. "I don't know whether Justin pushed her to drug use, but amongst their close-knit group of friends, smoking was commonplace. Justin and Selena would smoke marijuana together regularly."

METRO WORLD NEWS

Charlize Theron

Charlize contemplating marriage with new beau Sean Penn

Things are apparently moving pretty fast for new couple Charlize Theron and Sean Penn, as Penn has reportedly already moved into Theron's home and is contemplating matrimony, according to Radar Online.

"The two began talking about marriage in the last few weeks, after Sean moved into Charlize's house," a source says. "She has never wanted to get married, but seeing how Sean interacts with (her son) Jackson, she is having a change of heart.

"For the longest time, Charlize thought it was just going to be her and Jackson, and she was OK with that. For her to now be talking about getting married is a huge departure for Charlize."

Twitter

@TheRock
They sleep. We grind. #NoSnoozeButtonDammit

@ElizabethBanks
I promised you immaturity on @TheDailyShow, and I believe I delivered.

@SaraKSilverman
When I search "Basketball sneakers, women" on @Amazon all that comes up is a high-heel sneaker wedge

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Beckham gets a kick out of the fashion business

Let's talk about Becks. Whether you know him for his athletic skill or naked torso doesn't really matter at this point. David Beckham's empire is growing and no one is going to bring him (or his boxer briefs) down

Everybody knows who David Beckham is, either from his career as a football star or as the fashion icon and trendsetter he has become.

Metro Sweden's fashion editor Martin Hansson met David Beckham in New York to talk about the new collaboration with the Swedish fashion giant that premiered during the Super bowl weekend.

What has it been like to go from football player to a fashion icon?

I have always been very interested in clothes and style.

One day I love wearing a really tailored suit and the next day I like wearing what I'm wearing today: a pair of casual jeans and a sweater.

The opportunity to, in collaboration with H & M, produce an underwear collection that reflects my personal style feels natural and in tune with the times.

Your new collection, David Beckham for H & M, has been increased and is now aimed at younger boys as well. What message would you like to send to them?

I would like to tell them to go for their passion, work hard and stay focussed. I have always given 100 per cent in everything I do, both in football and in fashion. If you work hard enough and have fun at the same time there is a chance that you'll reach your dreams.

I dare you to deny that this man makes undies look good.
METRO WORLD NEWS

Family first

Victoria loves the pictures and just thinks it's fun. But my sons like the exposure most of all and think it's great to see their daddy everywhere.
David Beckham on H&M campaign

How does your wife Victoria feel about seeing you half naked on billboards and on TV all over the world?

(Laughs) Victoria loves the pictures and just thinks it's fun. But my sons like the exposure most of all and think it's great to see their daddy everywhere. I often wear the clothes from the new collection at home so they recognize it.

If you could look into your future, what do you hope to see?

I want to continue working with all that I'm doing today but also with new projects. Because I've played football the past 22 years it is refreshing to do something completely different now.

Get to know David

THE FACTS

Name: David Beckham

Age: 38

In the news: Has designed a new collection for H & M and is seen in a large campaign that premiered at the Super Bowl this weekend.

Lives: In Notting Hill, London

Family: Married to Victoria Beckham, four children.

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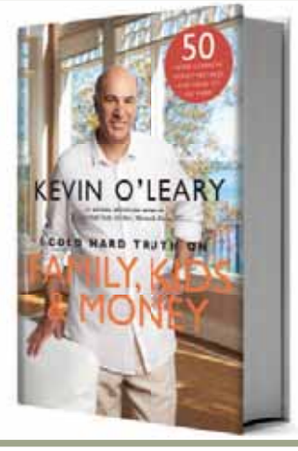

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Modern twist on an ancient art

Irresistible resist-dyed offerings

Mood indigo: A shibori tablecloth, placemats, and napkins from the OriShibori collection. DAVID MALOSH/ORISHIBORI.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A shibori scarf produced by Eskayel, a design firm based in New York. The home-design purveyor is creating the look of shibori patterns using ink, water and watercolors, followed by digital printing techniques. ESKAYEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A large OriShibori leather wall hanging. DAVID MALOSH/ORISHIBORI.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Setting the scene: OriShibori patterns its table linens on Japan's centuries-old fabric art of shibori. DAVID MALOSH/ORISHIBORI.COM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rediscovering tie-dye.

Designer collections embrace the hand-crafted beauty of Japanese shibori

From tablecloths, duvet covers and iPhone cases to wallpaper and startling calf-skin wall hangings, the ancient Japanese resist-dying technique of shibori has gone mainstream. Vera Wang, Ralph Lauren, Eileen Fisher, Levi's and innumerable fibre artists are breathing new life into the craft.

"The stillness and beauty of it really centres me," said Oriana DiNella, who recently launched her own web-based shibori line, including linen tableware, pillows, throws and large leather wall hangings, all made to order and hand-dyed in organic indigo.

"It feels like a rebellion against the fashion movement, where everything seems so fast and disposable," the New York-based designer explained.

Today's incarnations are as different from their early Japanese predecessors as they are from the wild, tie-dyed pieces that became emblematic of the '60s and '70s.

There's a sense of timelessness and calm to the modern shibori pieces, and also a renewed focus on workmanship and functionality.

"I love the bleeds, the fluidity of it. I love how the light shades of indigo can be so pale and watery and the navies can be such a deep, deep blue," DiNella said.

Brooklyn designer Rebecca Atwood uses modern fibre-reactive dyes for her Blauvelt Collection, which includes pillows and pouches. And home-design purveyor Eskayel is creating the look of shibori patterns using ink, water and watercolours, followed by digital printing techniques.

"We have wallpaper, rugs, fabric, pillows, baskets, iPhone cases, stationery, prints and wall hangings. Oh, and poufs," said founder and creative director Shanan Campanero, when asked about the company's shibori-inspired offerings.

Compared to the tie-dyes of a generation ago, she said, today's shibori-inspired works feature patterns that are more careful, deliberate and traditional.

Vera Wang's collection is centred on bedding, while Ralph Lauren's features swim trunks and clothing. Levi's has even come out with shibori-inspired jeans. But while mass-produced items lack the nuanced appeal of handcrafted works, they bring a surprising touch of texture and pizazz to the familiar.

Despite widespread interest in shibori in the West, "we are still concerned with its survival in Japan," explained Yoshiko Iwamoto Wada, author of Shibori, and Memory on Cloth.

"Adapting shibori to something contemporary is the key to its survival," she said. "When the big designers come out with it and young artists take it in new directions, then more people here and in Japan start to pay attention." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Make shibori at home

For those inclined to take on do-it-yourself projects, shibori has never been more accessible. It can be done easily at home using minimal equipment.

- Urban Outfitters sells its own shibori kits, and lessons are widely available online, from basic for beginners to truly advanced. Martha Stewart Living features a project on its website using a standard pressure cooker to make elegant shibori at home.
- Serious shibori artists and workshops across the country and internationally can be found through the Berkeley-based World Shibori Network. With a membership of dedicated artisans in Japan and around the globe, it was founded in the 1990s because of fears that the traditional craft would disappear.

Technique takes shape

ESKAYEL

Shibori is slow. It takes time, and has been around since about the 8th century. The word comes from the Japanese shiboru, meaning "to wring, squeeze or press."

- The technique involves twisting, tying, crumpling, stitching or folding fabric — usually silk or cotton — in various ways, transforming the two-dimensional material into a sculptural, three-dimensional form.
- This sculptural shape is then traditionally dyed, originally using indigo, although a huge variety of colours and dyes are now used.
- Sometimes, the same fabric is then twisted in some other way and then dyed again. When the wrappings are removed, the folds and creases where the fabric resisted the dye form distinctive crinkled textures and patterns.

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Plants droopy? Try light therapy

Give your houseplants an energy boost. Match their light needs and watch them perk up

Plants and people can't help but feel a bit wan this time of year, but things are brightening up already. Every day the sun is gradually moving higher in the sky, burning with increasing intensity and duration.

Light is measured in foot-candles — the amount of light cast on a square foot area by a candle at one foot distance — and the sun on a clear summer day can bathe us in 10,000 foot-candles. Contrast that with the paltry 500 foot-candles dribbling down on an overcast winter day.

Houseplants' problems are further compounded by windows, which cut sunlight by another 10 per cent. No wonder these plants, if they are growing at all, stretch for light this time of year.

There are ways you can help them.

One is to clean your windows. Any dirt on the glass cuts down light. While you're at it, dust or spritz off your plants' leaves; dust has the same ill effect.

Fortunately, many houseplants hail from the shade of tropical jungles. Still, flowering and fruiting take energy, which comes ultimately from the sun, so if you want flowers or fruits from such plants as Jerusalem cherry, citrus and miniature roses, you have to arrange for abundant light. Otherwise these plants will just stay alive, might even grow, but will not flower and fruit.

How much light is enough? Most flowering and fruiting plants need 1,000 or more foot-candles, although some, such as African violet, rex begonia, flowering maple, zebra plant and crown-of-thorns, will provide colorful displays even at about 500 foot-candles. Below that level, stick strictly to foliage plants such as cast iron plant, Swiss cheese plant, baby's-tears, parlour palm, pothos and ferns.

You can translate those needed foot-candles into light measured by a digital SLR camera. Set it on aperture priority with the aperture at f/8 and the ISO at 100. Hold a white sheet of paper so that whatever light you're measuring falls directly on it, and measure the shutter speed reading that the camera gives you (without a flash) for a good picture from about a foot away. Multiply the shutter speed times four for the approximate foot-candles. Shutter speed is usually expressed as a fraction of a second, so a reading of 500 is really 1/500th of a second; for foot-candles, you'd multiply 500 times four for 2,000 foot-candles. If light is very dim, the shutter speed might be more than a second; no need to measure, in that case, because in such light any plant will barely stay alive.

Take measurements at various locations and times of day. You'll probably be surprised at how little light falls near even a bright window.

If such exactitude is not your style, just gauge light by window direction. A south-facing window is brightest, followed by east and west-facing windows, with north windows being the darkest. Any obstruction, even from a leafless tree, will reduce light levels, as will moving a plant back from a window.

Natural light can be augmented with artificial light. Don't expect too much from artificial light though, especially for large plants, the bulk of whose leaves cannot get close to the light source. A fluorescent light, for example, casts as much as 900 foot-candles of light, but that's only within 6 inches of the light bulb. Light levels drop dramatically as you retreat from the bulb with the square of the distance. Double the distance and you have only one-fourth of the light, triple it and you have only one-ninth, etc.

In addition to intensity, the spectral distribution of the light can affect plant growth. Flowering requires more light at the red end of the spectrum. Fluorescent light tends toward the blue end of the spectrum.

Bulbs other than fluorescents have their own advantages and disadvantages. Incandescent lights convert much of their energy into heat, so you can't put a plant close enough for a dramatic effect on growth without scorching leaves. Special high intensity lights, such as mercury vapour and sodium lights, can dramatically increase growth, but the intensity and spectrum of the light will make your living room look more like a hospital operating room. LED (light-emitting diode) bulbs also have potential for indoor plant growing. They are efficient, and the spectral output can be tailored to plant needs.

Another plan, of course, is to wait out the sun. It's reassuring to watch plants naturally gather steam as the days grow longer. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Made-to-measure thrive-o-meter

LESS THAN 500 FOOT CANDLES

From the top: Swiss cheese plant, pothos, baby's-tears

500 FOOT CANDLES

From the top: African violet, flowering maple, zebra plant

ALL IMAGES: ISTOCK

1,000 FOOT CANDLES PLUS

From the top: Jerusalem cherry, citrus, miniature roses

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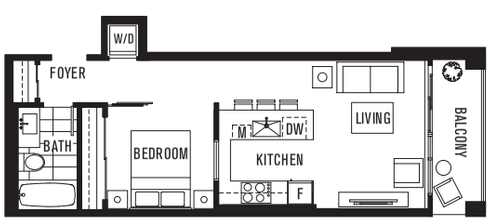

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Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Once this exotic candle is burned, the container can double as a rose vase. Grapefruit-guava candle in vase, $16, fruits-passion.ca.

Go to bed or wake up with a flirty message by simply flipping a pillow. Good Morning & Good Night Gorgeous feather insert pillow, $35, chapters.indigo.ca.

Show who's the animal in bed with this Animal-Print Satin sheet, from $40, zarahome.com.

Probably the most erotic way to cook your dinner — only two forks needed. Cast-iron fondue set, $56, crateandbarrel.com.

Forget making love on a bearskin rug. Grand Luxe Faux Fur Double Bean Bag in Mink, $295 US, restorationhardware.com.

Instant flames mean instant romance, anytime, anywhere. Cube Electric Stove, $249, dimplex.ca.

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Layering lights in a variety of locations produces a softer glow than using one central bright light. ISTOCK

Vanquish the darkest days of winter with bright lighting

DIY. Want to up the visual appeal of any room? A lighting plan is the place to start

The dark days of winter can be hard to bear, but don't wait for the summer sun to shed some light inside your home. Effective lighting is often overlooked during renovations, but it can turn a boring room into a dynamic, year-round oasis.

Since electrical work is extremely dangerous and regulated provincially, it's always recommended to hire a certified electrician for installation, but that doesn't mean you can't have fun dreaming up your best-lit space.

Rescue My Renovation

- For more bright renovation ideas, tune in to Rescue My Renovation, Wednesdays at 10 p.m. ET/PT on DIY Network Canada.

Guiding light

The first step to improve a room's lighting is to define its purpose. For example, kitchens need bright light around countertops to safely prepare food and read recipes. Living rooms need to be more flexible and accommodate activities like reading or watching a movie. Consider what each room is used for before deciding on what kind of lighting to install.

Layer lights

To make a room more visually interesting, incorporate lighting at different heights. In the kitchen, recessed lights can be complemented with lights under the cabinets and pendant lights above an island.

This technique produces a softer glow than one central and bright light, resulting in a more relaxing atmosphere. Wall sconces add an appealing visual aesthetic to almost any room and are great for adding symmetry around fireplaces, mirrors or beds.

Highlight key areas

Draw attention to artwork, bookshelves or a unique decorative object by strategically placing lights to highlight these pieces. Track lighting is a practical solution that allows individual lights to be easily moved and aimed in different directions.

Installing dimmers can also help make a room's lighting options more flexible and set the mood for everything from a romantic dinner to family game nights.

Don't leave design in the dark

While lighting placement is important, the design of the fixtures is equally significant. Pay careful attention to proportions and avoid dwarfing a dining room table with an oversized chandelier, or adding a vintage lamp to a modern room. With replaceable shades, lamps are a great investment that can be updated as styles change. For hanging lights, pick a stylish design with an understated colour so attention isn't directed toward the ceiling.

Track lighting can help draw attention to bookcases or artwork. ISTOCK

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Valentine's DIY

Here at Steven and Chris, we just adore Valentine's Day! It's the perfect time to celebrate the people who surround us with love every day. Here are a few ideas that will help you say, "I love you" to your someone special. For more tips, watch Steven and Chris weekdays at 2 p.m. on CBC.

ALL PHOTOS AND TEXT PROVIDED BY STEVEN AND CHRIS

Heart-mallows

Show you care with a jar of heart-shaped marshmallows. They're the perfect treat for anyone with a sweet tooth!

What you need:
- Large marshmallows
- Heart-shaped cookie cutters
- Vegetable oil
- Small Mason jar
- Red and pink ribbon

Method:
1. Cut the marshmallows in half.
2. Dip the cookie cutters into vegetable oil and press into the halved marshmallow. The vegetable oil will prevent your cookie cutter from sticking to the marshmallow.
3. Package in a glass jar with a pretty ribbon.

Hopeless Romantic Cocktail

Valentine's Day is a great excuse for spending time with people you love. Whether you're with someone special or enjoying a single girls' night-in, this Hopeless Romantic cocktail will definitely get you drunk on love.

What you need:
- 0.25 oz of lemon juice
- 0.25 oz of orange juice
- 0.25 oz of pineapple
- 1.5 oz Aperol
- 2 oz prosecco or champagne

Method:
1. Combine pineapple, orange and lemon juice,
2. Add the prosecco and Aperol.
3. Strain and serve in a tall glass.
4. Garnish with pineapple slices.
5. Add straws with festive toppers.

Crayon Hearts

Kids will love this multicolored heart crayon, and parents will really love how they'll keep their little hands busy — and away from sugary temptations!

What you need:
- Baking silicone heart-shaped moulds
- Cellophane bags
- Red paint or construction paper
- Multicoloured broken crayons
- Red staples
- Template from cbc.ca/stevenandchris

Method:
1. Take a silicone heart-shaped mould and fill it with left-over crayon bits.
3. Bake in the oven at 230 F for 15 minutes.
4. Let cool and remove from moulds.
5. Place crayon hearts in clear gift bags from a craft or dollar store.
6. Print love note using template and staple onto bags.

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Your kid can't catch Zs? Fear not, there's a bedtime solution for you

Spoiled for choice. From soothing projections to personalized playlists, parents take your pick

Do your kids balk at bedtime? Get gnarly at nap time? There are plenty of products aimed at parents looking to create the right mood in the nursery to send little ones off to sleep.

Parents of wakeful or colicky babies should talk with their pediatrician. And the first rule is not to put anything in the crib of a baby under a year old, says Deborah Pedrick, founder of the Family Sleep Institute in Stamford, Conn. (familysleep.com). She notes that the American Academy of Pediatrics advises that any loose articles, such as blankets or stuffed toys, be removed from a crib, although a pacifier is OK.

After a year, however, many parents do like to give babies comfort objects. Retailers and manufacturers are happy to oblige. Pillow Pets, those soft plush toys that double as pillows, include unusual animals like koalas, buffalo and elephants, as well as dolphins and dinosaurs. A lighted version, Dream Lites, projects a starry night sky on the wall for 20 minutes (mypillowpets.com).

White noise can be relaxing for many babies and children, Pantley says, especially a steady, unobtrusive, relaxing sound, such as rainfall, ocean waves or, for newborns, a heartbeat. The Graco Baby Sweet Slumber Sound Machine is a veritable sleep disco with 12 different sound options, MP3 port for customizable plug in music and a night light (toysrus.com).

You can personalize your child's bedtime routine by downloading songs or stories to Cloud B's menagerie of soft sleep critters (cloudb.com).

For troublesome sleepers, Pedrick likes the Sleep Buddy system, which consists of a blue light projector, a storybook and a reward chart. Stickers are awarded for nights when kids don't get out of bed; after consecutive successes, small prizes are won (sleepbuddy.com).

NYC mom Betsy Bradley dealt with her daughter Phoebe's colicky early months by using a Metropolitan Museum of Art lullaby CD and one of Miracle Baby's swaddling blankets. The blankets wrap baby snugly so she can't twitch and startle herself (miraclebaby.com). THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tech care of your child

If high-tech peace of mind is important, check out safetosleep.com: They offer a sleep mat integrated with a fibre-optic system that monitors baby's breathing and movement. You can also record your voice or lullabies.

COURTESY CLOUD B

Twilight Turtle

One shell of sleep for your child

Cloud b Twilight Turtle pillow, which is available on Cloudb.com, lights up the ceiling with a starry pattern. Parents can also download lullabies and stream them through the turtle via Bluetooth technology.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Growing in popularity

Project some happiness into their lives

Projectors that display starry skies and frolicking sheep, and pillows that glow in the dark, have caught on in recent years.

The No Cry Sleep Solution

But always remember darkness is natural

Elizabeth Pantley, author of The No Cry Sleep Solution (McGraw-Hill, 2002), says darkness is nature's way of signalling that it's time to sleep. The projectors or glowing pillows can be part of the bedtime ritual, she says, but then turn them off. Or put them behind furniture so the glow isn't as strong. (pantley.com).

Timed to perfection

20 min.

Many of the projectors do come with a 20-minute programmable shut-off.

Can't count yet? Try cuddling sheep: Land of Nod has super-soft plush blankets that have animal head shapes, so children can cuddle elephants, rabbits and lambs. LANDOFNOD.COM

Fungi to be around: Duux makes a cool-mist humidifier shaped like a mushroom, with an aromatherapy option. DUUX.COM

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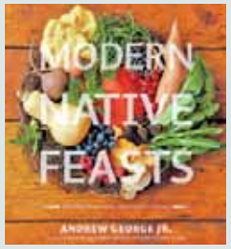
Oysters Rockefeller goes First Nations

Cookbook of the Week

Native eats for the 21st century



Full of healthy North American fare, Modern Native Feasts by Andrew George Jr. updates tradition for the 21st century. Native American cuisine comes of age in this collection that reinterprets and updates traditional Native recipes with modern, healthy twists. Andrew George Jr. was head chef for aboriginal foods at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. **METRO**

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

"I use this recipe to teach Aboriginal students a classical method of preparing seafood," writes Andrew George Jr. in his book Modern Native Feasts. "Using stinging nettles, dandelion greens, or sorrel instead of traditional spinach, gives a new twist to this dish"

1. Preheat broiler to high.

2. In frying pan, melt butter and sauté celery, onions, garlic, parsley, greens, and dash of Pernod. Stir constantly for about 3 minutes. Remove from heat.

Be careful

Take care when opening oysters. Protect your hand by wearing an oyster glove or covering a knife with a towel.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup (60 ml) unsalted butter
- 1 celery stalk, finely sliced
- 2 green onions, finely sliced
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced
- 1 tbsp finely chopped parsley
- 1 cup (250 ml) finely chopped stinging nettles, dandelion greens, or sorrel leaves
- dash Pernod, or other anise-flavoured liqueur
- 2 slices fresh white bread, crusts removed, torn into pieces
- 12 fresh oysters in shell
- 1 tbsp Pernod
- rock salt, for serving
- 12 lemon wedges, to garnish
- 12 parsley sprigs, to garnish
- salt, to taste
- Tabasco sauce, to taste

3. In a blender, combine greens mixture with bread and process for about 30 seconds. Using an oyster knife, twist open shells and remove oysters. In a large bowl, toss oysters with 1 tbsp Pernod. Drain oysters and reserve liquid. Remove any shell fragments. Discard top shells, clean and dry bottom shells.

This recipe makes 12 oysters (two to six servings, depending on how large they are and much your guests like oysters). TRACEY KUSIEWICZ OF FOODIE PHOTOGRAPHY (FOODIEPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)

4. Line a baking tray with rock salt and place oyster shells on top. Place 1 oyster into each shell and spoon reserved liquid onto each. Spoon crumb mixture on top, completely covering each oyster. Broil for 1–2 minutes, until topping bubbles. Arrange oysters on a serving dish and garnish with sprigs of parsley and lemon wedges. Season oysters to taste with salt and/or Tabasco sauce.

RECIPE EXCERPTED FROM MODERN NATIVE FEASTS: HEALTHY, INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE CUISINE BY ANDREW GEORGE JR. (PUBLISHED BY ARSENAL PULP PRESS, 2013).

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Sport review

WHL backing UBC's men's hockey team

The Western Hockey League has joined the fight to try and save the UBC men's hockey team, with its varsity status in question pending the outcome of the school's contentious sport review.

WHL commissioner Ron Robison told Metro on Wednesday that the league and its owners — including Ron Toigo of the Vancouver Giants — are worried about the future of the university's men's hockey program, especially with the league's partnership with Canada West in a joint scholarship for players.

"Our concern, first and foremost, is that opportunity may not be there should UBC cancel the men's program," said Robison.

Last month, UBC named the 16 men's and women's teams that qualified for varsity status following the first stage of its sport review. The men's hockey team was not on that list.

Coaches for the teams that did not qualify could submit a five-year plan to the sport review advisory team, and a final decision on whether those teams retain varsity status or are demoted to a club level will be announced at the end of February.

Robison said the league's owners, who met for meetings this week in Las Vegas, discussed initiatives to help save the UBC program, including a pre-season tournament that would include the five B.C. Division teams — the Giants, Victoria Royals, Kamloops Blazers, Kelowna Rockets and Prince George Cougars.

"We've made a commitment to throw our full support behind the UBC men's hockey program," he said.

CAM TUCKER/METRO

Should Henrik stay or should he go?

The great Olympic debate. Vancouver's captain is nursing an injury but still slated to suit up for Sweden at the Sochi Games

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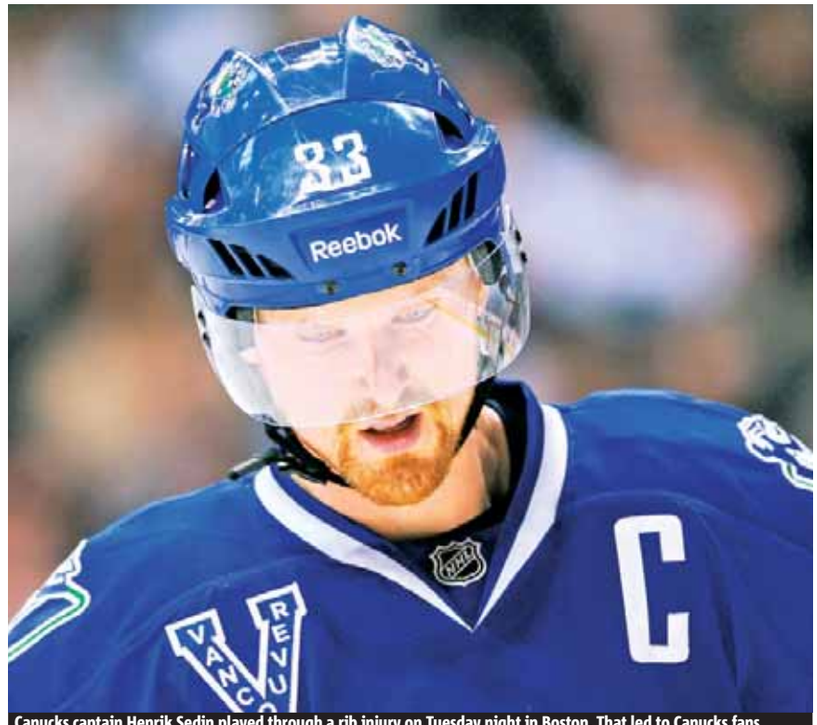


Canucks captain Henrik Sedin played through a rib injury on Tuesday night in Boston. That led to Canucks fans wondering if the Swede should play in the Olympics. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Henrik Sedin's intangible quality of toughness will never be measured in fights, bone-crushing body checks or washing an opponent's face with the moist, stinky palm of a glove.

Instead, it's been proven by the 679 consecutive regular-season games he played in from March of 2004, before the second lockout, to January of 2014.

It's proven by the numbers he and his brother, Daniel, have put up over the years in the face of the physical abuse they take on the ice from the opposition's best defencemen and by the way asinine comments and monikers like "Sedin Sisters" seem to roll right off their backs.

Henrik Sedin, the Canucks' captain, was certainly courageous in playing through a rib injury Tuesday night against the detested Boston Bruins.

The fact he was even out on the ice past a certain point lit up Twitter during the game and was a discussion point on talk radio as well.

There were calls on television that Henrik should've been removed from the game after the second period.

But he stayed in, as the Canucks looked to break free of their scoring funk and losing streak, which now stands at five games heading into Thursday's game against the Montreal Canadiens.

The Canucks now have two games left before the Olympic break. Henrik, 33, is on Sweden's roster for the men's hockey competition in Sochi.

Because of his age and because NHL players might not participate in future Winter Olympics, this could be Henrik's final chance to play for Sweden in this competition.

He's also not nearly at his best, physically.

Team 1040 ran a poll question following Tuesday's game, asking listeners: Should Henrik Sedin play in the Olympics?

It's a fair question, especially since he means so much to the Canucks.

The Sedins, despite their drop in scoring production over the last several weeks, drive Vancouver's offence. So much of the team's success is predicated on their performance.

Tough is a word that could also best describe the state of the situation surrounding the Canucks, Henrik Sedin and his Olympic aspirations.

Follow Cam Tucker on Twitter @camtucker_metro

Seahawks celebrate with the 12th Man

Marshawn Lynch rides atop a vehicle during the Seahawks' championship parade in Seattle on Wednesday. JONATHAN FERREY/GETTY IMAGES

Hundreds of thousands of notoriously loud Seahawks fans cranked up the volume Wednesday, cheering, chanting and going berserk during a parade and ceremony to celebrate the first Super Bowl victory in the history of the franchise.

The mood in Seattle was electrified as the parade featuring the NFL champions began near the Space Needle and made its way to CenturyLink Field, the home of the team.

At a ceremony inside the stadium, the team thanked its loyal followers — the 12th Man — capping a day of boisterous celebration that drew an estimated 700,000 revellers to Seattle.

Thousands of students apparently skipped school to attend. Seattle Public Schools said more than 25 per cent of the district's 51,000 students were absent in the morning. By comparison, about five per cent were absent the day before. The school district also said 565 teachers were absent, far more than usual.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"This is a historical event, once in a lifetime. To not show up would be blasphemy."

Seahawks fan Jesse Lake, 36

4 SPORTS

Greater in Year 8?

Kaillie Humphries and Heather Moyse practise a run at the Sanki Sliding Centre on Wednesday in Sochi, Russia. ALEX LIVESEY/GETTY IMAGES

Bobsled. She's dominated the circuit since winning gold in 2010, and Calgarian says she might have another gear for Sochi

Kaillie Humphries won Olympic bobsled gold four years ago and has finished first at the last two world championships.

In what should give her rivals cause for concern in Sochi, she is just now hitting her peak.

"They say it takes eight to 10 years to build a really good bobsleigh pilot," Humphries said. "I'm at year eight right now."

The timing seems to be lining up perfectly for the 28-year-old. She has won three World Cup titles this season and is in her usual perch on top of the overall standings.

She reunited with brakewoman Heather Moyse of Summerside, P.E.I., and they opened the campaign with an impressive win in Calgary.

Triumphant underdogs four years ago in Vancouver, now they're the team to beat.

Zen in a bullet

"You have to be able to feel, you have to be able to see. So on the track walk I'm able to see things slowed down. I'm able to look at things exactly as they are."

Kaillie Humphries, on racing down a bobsled run at 130 km/h.

"She's got great expectations," Canadian coach Tom De La Hunty said of Humphries. "She's won the last two world championships. So at the top level, she knows how to deal with the pressure and the pressure is going to be great this time I'll tell you."

Humphries has emerged as one of the faces of the Canadian team in the lead-up to Sochi. It's a position she seems to enjoy.

The Canadian bobsled team attended a half-hour introductory news conference Wednesday at the Gorki Media Centre in Sochi. Humphries stayed for an extra 20 minutes, holding court with reporters in her friendly and engaging manner.

The spotlight shines brightest every four years and Humphries is ready.

"Mentally I'm stronger," she said. "Physically I feel like I'm in a great position right now. Overall it takes a whole package. It's about balance, it's not just one aspect. I'm definitely a lot more well-rounded. I still get tested, I still have my moments when I fail those tests.

"I still am learning a lot in the position that I'm in."

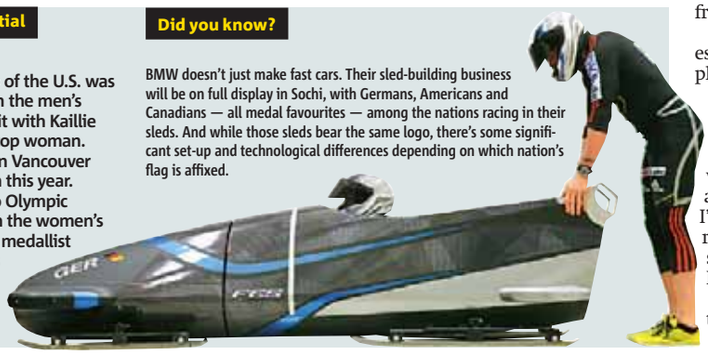
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Repeat potential

Steven Holcomb of the U.S. was the top driver on the men's World Cup circuit with Kaillie Humphries the top woman. Both won gold in Vancouver and might again this year. The U.S. has two Olympic track athletes on the women's team, with gold medallist Lauryn Williams and Lolo Jones qualifying as push athletes.

Did you know?

BMW doesn't just make fast cars. Their sled-building business will be on full display in Sochi, with Germans, Americans and Canadians — all medal favourites — among the nations racing in their sleds. And while those sleds bear the same logo, there's some significant set-up and technological differences depending on which nation's flag is affixed.



Canadian flag-raising

'Sense of majesty' at welcome party

As the sun set over Russia's Black Sea, it shined on the Canadian flag just as it was hitting the top of the flagpole with the national anthem playing in the background.

It marked an unofficial start at the Sochi Olympics for Canada. It didn't take long for chef de mission Steve Podborski to stop thinking about red and white and start dreaming about gold.

"When the Canadian flag went up, the sun is glaring on it, it blows out and you can see the Maple Leaf and I'm thinking, 'I'm sure we're going to hear more of that,'" he said. "It was really, really great."

Before the flag went up, about a hundred Canadian athletes marched into the city's international plaza. They watched the Choir of Siberia sing and dance and a Russian honour guard march beside the stage.

It was an expression of Russian culture two days before the official opening ceremony in Sochi.

"The Russians really bring a sense of majesty and something big to a ceremony like this," Podborski said. "It was really charming."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Team Canada is welcomed by the official flag-raising ceremony on Wednesday in Sochi. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Olympic relay. Flame reaches final destination

The Olympic flame reached Sochi Wednesday, following a 65,000-kilometre route, the longest in the history of the Games.

The relay generated genuine public enthusiasm, featuring famous cultural figures, athletes and other celebrities, and drawing big crowds across Russia.

But it also has seen some spectacular gaffes, with the flame flickering out on dozens of occasions and, in some cases, even engulfing the bearers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Record-setting journey

The relay started in Moscow on Oct. 7 and stopped at more than 130 cities and towns across Russia. Along the way, the torch travelled to:

- **The North Pole.** Aboard a nuclear-powered icebreaker, the ceremony involved torch bearers from eight Arctic nations.
- **Outer space.** On Nov. 7, a rocket carried the torch to the International Space Station. Cosmonauts Oleg Kotov and Sergei Ryazanskiy then took the torch on an unprecedented spacewalk Nov. 9. For safety reasons, the torch didn't burn aboard the ISS.
- **Europe and Russia's highest mountain.** Russian mountaineers lit the torch atop Mount Elbrus — at 18,510 feet — the highest mountain in Russia and Europe.
- **The world's deepest lake.** In November, divers plunged into Lake Baikal, the world's biggest and deepest freshwater lake, with special torches burning underwater.

'You can't force healing': Stamkos staying home

Steven Stamkos will not play for Team Canada at the Sochi Olympics after tests revealed Wednesday that his broken right leg is not completely healed.

Tampa Bay Lightning doctors said they couldn't clear him to play after examining his most recent CT scan and will re-evaluate his condition again in two to three weeks.

It's a big blow for the 23-year-old, who had been optimistic earlier this week that he might be able to play by as soon as Saturday.

"Today is obviously very disappointing for me," Stamkos said in a release. "I honestly believe that we did everything possible in order to have my injured leg ready in time for the Olympics, but I realize you can't force healing. I know, in the best interest of my long-term health, I cannot represent Canada in Sochi, as much as I would like to."

Steven Stamkos has been out since he broke his leg Nov. 11. He underwent surgery to have a titanium rod inserted into his right tibia. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Yzerman's next decision

Hockey Canada did not immediately announce a replacement for Stamkos, though Claude Giroux, Lightning teammate Marty St. Louis and James Neal figured to be the leading candidates.

Lightning general manager Steve Yzerman, who is also Team Canada's executive director, said Stamkos "should not be participating in game action at any time in the near future." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Something will happen today that takes you by surprise but if you stand back and look at it in an objective light, you will see it had to occur. Chances are a few weeks from now, you will be glad it happened.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Do you go out and have fun or do you stay in and get work done? If you are smart — you will sacrifice short-term enjoyment for long-term peace of mind.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You have thought about what you are planning and all you need to do now is get on with it. Don't worry that certain people may not approve. Most likely they're jealous.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
As Mercury turns retrograde today don't take anything for granted. But the world should not take you for granted either. Do something out of character, something no one would ever expect of you.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Unexpected events will disrupt your routine today and you won't be happy about it. But as there is nothing you can do to change things there's not much point getting uptight about it, is there? Stay calm and carry on.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If a colleague makes an error and causes you problems today, don't make a big deal of it. Everyone makes mistakes so do what you can do make them feel better.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
There will be disorder today, most likely at work. Colleagues may discover that they are not up to keeping the promises they made. You could see it coming, so you won't be fazed.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You may have to be abrupt with certain people today, simply because they are too slow to work things out for themselves. Don't bruise egos for fun but make sure what needs to get done does.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
With mind planet Mercury beginning one of its retrograde phases there is simply no point rushing to get things done. In the greater scheme of things, they're really not that important.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Be careful when dealing with those whose outlook on life is different to yours. If you adopt the attitude that you're always right and they're always wrong, conflict is inevitable.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You try to be honest in your dealings but you just can't get through to people. This is likely to be a theme of the next few weeks while Mercury moves retrograde, so get used to it.

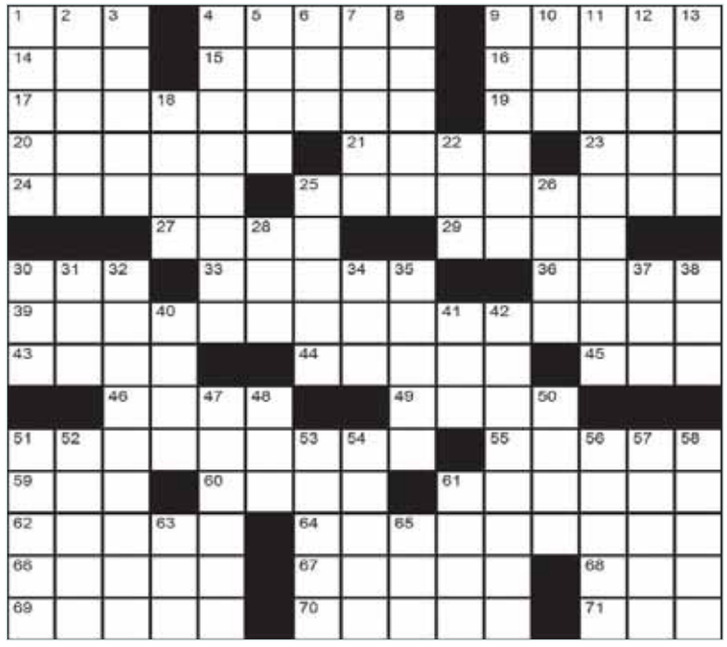
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You're hardly a decisive person and with Mercury, planet of communication and the mind, turning retrograde in your sign today you will change your mind yet again. Others won't like it but you are who you are.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Not near
4. Played over
9. "Batman" star Adam, and surnamesakes
14. Tenn. neighbour
15. Southwestern Ontario gorge village
16. Sir Newton
17. Wayne and Shuster: 2 wds.
19. Steamy spot
20. Geena's 1991 title role
21. Captain Hook's sidekick
23. Wine aperitif
24. Coffee brand
25. Helmet part: 2 wds.
27. Simon Cowell's production company
29. Athena's walkway
30. "__ sure be nice if..."
33. Some sound
36. Feminine suffix
39. PEI is geographically unique because it what?: 3 wds.
43. Uni
44. Also, in Montreal
45. Kit
46. "Wow."
49. Ages
51. Certain classical composer
55. Ms. Knightley
59. Marion __ (Pioneering female aviator of Canada, b.1918 - d.1995)
60. Use red pen
61. Did a sports team transaction
62. __-toothed tiger
64. Canadian actor who plays Captain Renard on "Grimm": 2 wds.
66. Carpeting 'spot'
67. "We Can Work __" by The Beatles
68. Navigator's dir.
69. Goes up-and-down in weight
70. Crowned heads in Russia, once
71. Brit's thank yous

Down
1. Actualities
2. Hawaiian hi
3. Noodle dish
4. Eddie __, Marius in "Les Miserables" (2012)
5. "Air Force One" (1997) actor Mr. Baskin
6. Towels holder
7. In _ __ (Hurried)
8. Ms. Watts
9. Most sage
10. Conductor, __-Pekka Salonen
11. Bigg Soxx: Canadian rapper on new song "Heroes" feat. Choclair, prod. by C4ENT.
12. Actress Ms. Raymonde
13. Cliff type
18. Deer sorts
22. Ells and Ems followers
25. __ _ phrase
26. Steel-__ boots
28. Lettuce variety
30. Doctrine
31. Even if, briefly
32. Splashy '80s Canadian series: 2 wds.
34. Old French coin
35. Actor, Buddy __
37. Three, in Turin
38. Ballpark fig.
40. Tooth part
41. Bear, in Barcelona
42. Hockey arena regulars, colloquially: 2 wds.
47. Martin and Charlie
48. Brick carrier
50. Char, in cooking
51. Domineering
52. Lyre-playing Muse
53. Sojourn
54. Mona Lisa's room at the Louvre in Paris, Salle des __
56. Boomtown Rats' "_ __ Like Mondays"
57. Queen: Spanish
58. Tools for woodworkers
61. Wee weekday
63. "Blame It on __" (1984)
65. "___ guy walks into..."

Yesterday's Crossword

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	7	1	2		3	4	5	
5	2						6	8
		3	9		2	8		
	6			4			2	
		5	3		7	6		
3	4						8	1
	9	7	5		1	2	4	

Yesterday's Sudoku

3	6	1	5	4	2	9	7	8
4	7	5	9	3	8	2	1	6
2	8	9	7	1	6	3	5	4
7	9	2	1	6	5	4	8	3
5	1	3	2	8	4	6	9	7
8	4	6	3	9	7	1	2	5
1	3	8	4	7	9	5	6	2
6	2	4	8	5	1	7	3	9
9	5	7	6	2	3	8	4	1

Today
0°/-7°
Sunny

Friday
-1°/-6°
Sunny

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32915 South Fraser Way

Aldergrove
26310 Fraser Hwy.

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Crystal Mall
Lougheed Town Centre
Metropolis at Metrotown
3855 Henning Dr.
4501 North Rd.
4711 Kingsway

Chilliwack
Cottonwood Mall
Eagle Landing Shopping Centre
7544 Vedder Rd.
45300 Luckakuck Way

Coquitlam
Coquitlam Centre
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2020 Oxford Connector
2988 Glen Dr.
3000 Lougheed Hwy.

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Scottsdale Centre
1517 56th St.
4841 Delta St.

Langley
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20159 88th Ave.
20202 66th Ave.

Maple Ridge
Haney Place Mall
22661 Lougheed Hwy.

Mission
Junction Shopping Centre
32670 Lougheed Hwy.

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